

MAY 1948

ONE SHILLING

# THEATRE WORLD

Scenes from "The Relapse" and "Coriolanus"



Picture by Angus McBean

CYRIL RITCHARD and MADGE ELLIOTT

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# THEATRE WORLD

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## **Sonia Dresdel**

who, after an absence from the West End stage of nearly two years, is now playing the woman in *Break-Up*, Helge Krog's three-character play at the Arts. Later this month London will see Miss Dresdel in her first leading screen part, the fiendish heroine of *This Was A Woman*, which she played so flamboyantly at the Comedy throughout 1944.

(Portrait by Denis de Marney)





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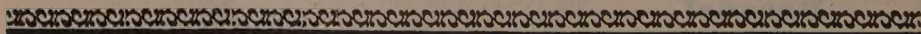
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**May 1948**

**Over the Footlights**

**T**HE opening plays in this year's Stratford Festival have aroused considerable comment, on the whole favourable. The widely contrasted Hamlets of Paul Scofield and Robert Helpmann have been highly praised and the latter has proved his growing strength as an actor with performances of rare individuality as King John and Shylock. Altogether the season should prove one of the most notable yet held at the Memorial Theatre and it is hoped to include a full review and pictures in a later issue.

In the West End there have been one or two casualties of late, including *I Remember Mama*, a play of delicate insight which certainly deserved a better fate, and *Rocket to the Moon*, the Clifford Odets play at the St. Martin's, which although full of interest, seemed to elude the comprehension of the average playgoer, in spite of Yolande Donlan's brilliant performance.

Plays produced too late for review include *Break-Up* at the Arts, *Frenzy*, St. Martin's, *Happy With Either*, St. James', *Royal Circle* at Wyndham's, and the unusual American short opera programme at the Aldwych, which consists of *The Telephone*, a curtain-raiser, and *The Medium*, a tragedy in 2 acts.

Early May will see Leslie Henson return to the West End in *Bob's Your Uncle* at the Saville, and on 14th May Donald Wolfit is opening a short season at the Westminster Theatre with *The Master Builder*, which is to be produced by Peter Cotes. The strong American play *All My Sons* by Arthur Miller is due to open at the Lyric, Hammer-smith, on 11th May, with Margalo Gilmore and Joseph Calleia in the lead.

The opera event of the month at Covent Garden will be the new production of *Boris Godunov* on 12th May. Peter Brook is pro-

ducing Mussorgsky's work and the costumes and scenery are by Wakhevitch. Karl Rankl will conduct.

*Job*, a masque for dancing, with music by Vaughan Williams, is to be revived by the Sadler's Wells Ballet on 20th May, with new costumes and scenery by John Piper and the original choreography by Ninette de Valois. The part of Satan will be danced by Robert Helpmann and Elihu by Alexis Rassiné.

The first performance of this work is to be a gala performance in aid of Sadler's Wells Ballet Benevolent Fund, and Her Majesty the Queen has most graciously given it her patronage. The whole proceeds of the evening, without any deduction of expenses, will, through the courtesy of the Covent Garden Opera Trust, go to the Fund.

On 7th June Alicia Markova and Anton Dolin will be joining the Company as guest artists for four weeks. They will appear in *Giselle*, *Les Sylphides*, *Le Lac des Cygnes*, *The Sleeping Beauty*. Anton Dolin will also appear as Satan in *Job*, a role he created.

The summer tour repertoire of Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet, opening at Cambridge on 3rd May, includes all the new works produced during the past season at the Wells—*Valses Nobles et Sentimentales*, *Parures* and *Children's Corner*, and also *The Haunted Ballroom*, not previously taken on tour by this Company.

The decrease in the Entertainment Tax for theatres announced in the Budget is a welcome relief for managements, now hard-pressed by rapidly increasing costs of production. It is not yet announced officially just how the price of theatre tickets will be affected, though it seems probable that the concession will be shared between managements and public. F.S.

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# New Shows of the Month

"Dark Eyes"—Strand, 24th March.

"The Happiest Days of Your Life"—Apollo, 29th March.

"Major Barbara"—Arts, 30th March.

"Coriolanus"—New, 31st March.

"Maid to Measure"—King's, Hammersmith, 7th April.

"Little Lambs Eat Ivy"—Ambassadors, 8th April.

"Liliom"—Saville, 12th April.

"The Burning Bush"—New Lindsey, 14th April.

"Lucrece"—Boltons, 15th April.

"Portrait of Hickory"—Embassy, 21st April.

## "Dark Eyes"

A PLAY with as promising a central situation as this was certain to have many amusing moments. However, the situation in itself is scarcely strong enough to support a full length play, so that an immense burden is placed on the resourcefulness of the three leading characters. That they emerge so triumphantly is a great tribute to their histrionic skill.

These three are charming Russian refugees in America, who, we gather, have long fought a losing battle against encroaching

poverty. A friend of theirs, Prince Nikolai, gate crashes them into the decorous Long Island home of a wealthy American. The Prince is engaged to the daughter of the house, a fact scarcely excuse enough for inflicting his temperamental—if irresistible—lady friends on his fiancée's family. But after the Field household's initial amazement, nothing appears to startle anyone, and the play proceeds in a welter of shouting, laughter, tears and mock suicides. The three heroines have no inhibitions and not even the dignified presence of Grandmother Field is able to suppress them. Instead they make the occasion of her birthday a great and noisy celebration in the Russian manner, to the delight of all.

Of the three actresses who play these colourful parts, the odd thing is that the most Russian of them all is in fact an American. Polly Rowles is superb as Natasha Rapakovich; an achievement indeed, since her companions are Baronova and Delarova, who, having been famous ballet dancers of the Russian school, are if anything, more Russian than the Russians. Yvonne Brynner is the Prince Nikolai, who really understands so little the ways of the American upper ten, and the other roles, though



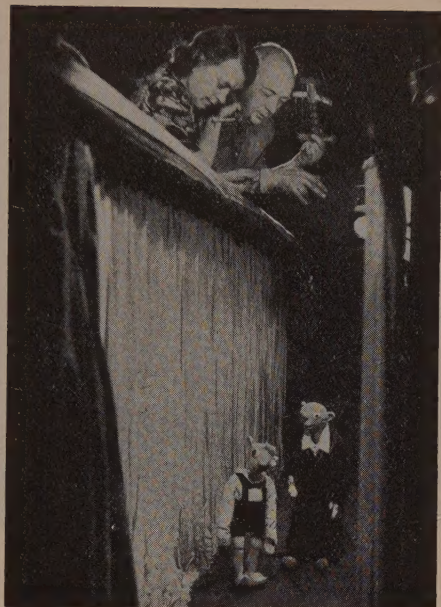
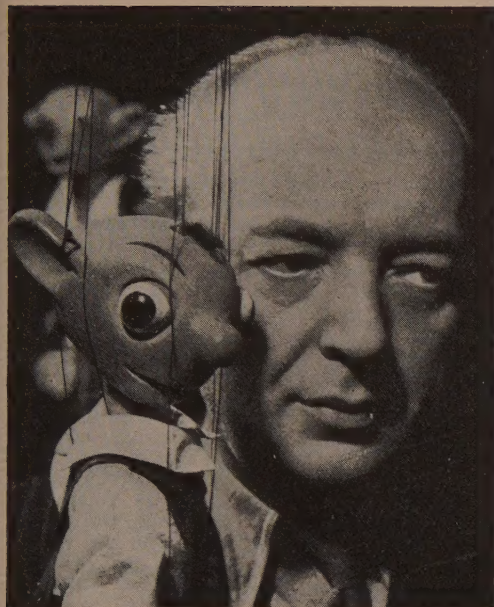
## "Carissima"

AT THE PALACE

A scene from Act I of *Carissima*, the new romantic musical at the Palace. In the picture, L. to R., are Elizabeth Theilmann, Lester Ferguson, Shirl Conway, Hugh Dempster and Hannah Watt.

John Vick





## Puppets

FROM CZECHOSLOVAKIA

(Left): Professor Skupa and Hurvinek in the Puppet Theatre season of two weeks at the Lyric, Hammersmith. (Right): The Professor and assistant with Hurvinek and Spejble, the two leading puppets. This programme followed the revival of the Pinero classic, *Dandy Dick*, on 26th April.

they pale into insignificance before the Russian contingent, are nicely put over by Genine Graham as Helen Field, Bill Staughton as her brother Larry, May Carey as Grandmother Field, Norris Smith as Wiloughby, the coloured servant, and Edwin Styles as John Field. The latter, though a very English edition of an American business man, is a finely balanced performance and most convincing.

This comedy, which, since it was written by Elena Miramova in collaboration with Eugenie Leontovich, has we feel more than a touch of real life about it, is skilfully directed by Charles Goldner, who contrives never to let the Russian temperament over-run the plot.

F.S.

## "The Happiest Days of Your Life"

**J**OHAN Dighton's new farce at the Apollo has a flying start. Faced with the invasion of their boys' school by a girls' academy, two masters parry the situation with a verbal dexterity and humour which if not wit, is yet good theatre currency for laughs. Myles Eason is young romantic, Colin Gordon is laconic gravity. When they are joined by George Howe as the headmaster, and Margaret Rutherford as the

intruding headmistress, the fun does not evaporate.

But when two pairs of inquisitive parents arrive, the author makes the false move which takes the spontaneity from the laughter. He exaggerates situations, he moves to a forced climax which owes little to, in fact has moved far from, the happy felicities of his opening act.

Yet the two masters (Colin Gordon especially) have won their hold on us, and we are never free from their thrall. The distaff side contributes a nice touch of romance from Patricia Hastings, excellent gymnasium heartiness from Viola Lyel, horrid juvenile pertness from Molly Weir.

Richard Bird directs with a very sure hand, and it has been his fortune to stage a farce which, while abounding in laughs, has just missed being a classic in its sphere.

F.J.D.

## "Major Barbara"

**P**ETER Glenville's production of Shaw's play at the Arts Theatre in April was an interesting proof that virile thought aptly expressed in the dialogue can give the dramatist victory over visual distractions. Thea New's settings and costumes were a little too emphatic on period, but the acting was not lacking in strength and a competent cast found some good enter-





(Left): HILDA SIMMS

An unusual new study of the talented young actress who plays the title role in *Anna Lucasta*, the moving play about Negro life, which continues to draw packed houses at His Majesty's.

(Portrait by Denis de Marney)

tainment in the armaments controversy of 1912.

There was a very fine *Cusins* by Victor Lucas. Playing well within the character, he suggested reserves of power while at the same time finding the whole range and scope of the part. *Cusins* is a rewarding character for the right player, and here he was found. Well matched, too, by Stanley Ratcliffe's Andrew Undershaft, confident in his industrial strength and impregnable power.

Barbara Lott played Barbara with real sincerity and some charm, but rather missing the fire of personal conviction. Violet Farebrother's Lady Britomart had a little too much emphasis, scoring her period points with some heaviness.

Max Brimmell and Toke Tounley were a pair of good examples of 1912's human flotsam in a Salvation Army shelter.

It remains to add that this was the Western Theatre Company's production, coming direct from a tour of the mining valleys of South Wales.

F.J.D.

## "Coriolanus"

LATER in this issue an illustrated feature of *Coriolanus* is included and little remains to be said about this interesting production by The Old Vic Theatre Company except perhaps to lay stress on the clever acting of the principals and the balanced production of E. Martin Browne, who has made his debut as producer for The Old Vic Company with this revival of one of Shakespeare's least performed plays.

It was significant that most of the critics found themselves surprised at the parallels presented by this story of Roman politics and much that is happening today. It is

certainly amazing how up-to-date the scene is. *Coriolanus* himself remains a baffling personality, too much of the demagogue and too little of the statesman. It is a tribute to John Clements that he made of this inconsistent character a man of real stature and even charm. Alec Guinness' Menenius was a gem of polished acting; a performance that might be seen again and again with fresh revelation every time. He achieved the almost impossible for a young actor, namely, the portrayal of an upright old man, keen of eye and firm of tread, no hint of doddering and yet all the same an old man. The other outstanding performance was from Rosalind Atkinson as Volumnia. Miss Atkinson has a most powerful voice and a wide dramatic range and her intercessory scene with *Coriolanus* reached the heights of truly great acting. F.S.

## "Maid to Measure"

IT is a fine point in revue construction as to how far the dominant personality should dominate. In her return to the London stage at the King's, Hammersmith, Jessie Matthews has far from the lioness's share of the show, and it is the general company who leave the abiding impression, with a robust claim from Lew Parker for a little more to do to establish him as the dominating lion.

Which means that this revue is good, even entertainment, with the team spirit happily in evidence. There is no attempt in the writings to achieve pungent satire; there is a successful aim to blend colour, movement, song, dance and humour. Weakest element is the music, by no means distinguished, sometimes not tuneful, and often constructed at a tempo exhausting to the dancers.

As for Jessie herself, she is the same *gamin* personality, yet different. Her hold on a large audience is as strong as ever, her dancing as good, her singing as huskily inadequate. The difference is in a new quality of quietness, and this is all gain.

Tommy Fields, Lolita Cordoba, Joan Heal, Robert Dorning acquit themselves well in the various sketches, of which one is rather too unfair to the work of the Women's Land Army.

F.J.D.

## "Little Lambs Eat Ivy"

THIS adaptation from his book *Cabbage Patch* by Noel Langley has about it all the marks of a successful comedy. The



ingredients are not by any means original. The idea of putting on the stage a crazy family is an old favourite, but Mr. Langley has an undoubted gift for keeping the action on the move. In this case indeed we are left almost breathless by the comings and goings of the crazy offspring and in-laws of Essie, the titled mother of the brood and a lady of devastating charm and irresistible woolly-mindedness. Essie is a stock character if you like, but clever Joan Haythorne somehow contrives to instil a new look into a familiar creation.

The background to this involved tale of Essie's abortive efforts to get her rent paid is the birth of twins to her daughter, a process that lasts during the entire play, with doctor and nurse in attendance. On the face of it this is not a laughing matter but since we are assured early on that there are no complications we are ready to dismiss the poor young lady from our mind and concentrate on her distracted young husband and the other odd assorted characters and their doings.

In waxing enthusiastic over the acting of this comedy it would be idle to pretend that Mr. Langley has not provided some plums of parts for up-and-coming young actors and actresses. All must agree, however, that Lionel Murton as Dougall, the young Canadian father-to-be, gives a brilliant performance and proves himself an actor to be



LILIAN BRAITHWAITE

who is appearing as the Queen Mother in *Royal Circle*, the new Romilly Cavan comedy at Wyndhams, with Ralph Richardson as King Marcus and Meriel Forbes as Madame Fantina, the royal mistress.

(Portrait by John Vickers)

watched. Joan Forrest, Jeannette Tregarten and John Mackwood are others who shine in this swift-moving comedy, whose title alone merits a run. F.S.



BINNIE HALE and BOBBY HOWES

as they appear in an item from *Four, Five, Six*, the successful new revue at the Duke of York's Theatre.

(Scene by Houston-Rogers)

## "The Burning Bush"

HERE is another Hungarian play, *The Burning Bush*, by Geza Hergzeg and Heinz Herald, in an English version by Noel Langley. This is a vivid demonstration of the course of a once notorious criminal trial of fifteen Jews of Tisza Eszlar, accused of the ritual murder of a Christian girl, during which public ignorance, prejudice and superstition were disgracefully exploited by anti-semitic factions. The present production is a little unfair to Hungary, whose national record is less besmirched by anti-semitism than is that of most countries. It is also misleading, because the action is represented as taking place in 1938 instead of 1882. This post-dating of history is serious because this is a powerful demonstration, ably produced by Leslie Armstrong, with a cast of forty-five and many fine individual performances.

There is no dividing line between actors and audience. The highest peak of excitement is reached by a rush of toughs from the back of the auditorium to the acting area, where they are met by police in a mêlée which rejoices the astonished beholder by its living likeness to a drawing by Fougasse. So that in its way it is artistic and



## "Annie Get Your Gun"



Denis de Marney

### DOLORES GRAY

A delightful new portrait of the clever star of *Annie Get Your Gun*, the American musical at the Coliseum, which continues among the biggest hit shows in London. In the role of the little pep girl, Annie Oakley, Miss Gray has endeared herself to countless London theatregoers.

certainly it is dramatic. Gangway seats are hardly safe.

The demonstration occupies three hours and Justice triumphs in the last fifteen minutes. The fifteen accused of 1882 are reduced to a sizeable six. Foremost among them is the unhappy Jew whose 14-year-old son has been secured by the prosecution and unscrupulously coached into the role of chief witness against his father and his co-religionists. Marne Maitland most movingly depicts the mental agony of the father, and Dilys Lay is horribly successful with the part of the boy. Frederick Piper well fulfils the task of representing Justice threatened by powerful political interests and ill at ease. These interests are ably personified by Philip Stainton, whose Baron Onody is a fearful colossus of brute force and arrogant ignorance. In the sympathetic part of Defence Counsel, Karel Stepanek is most able and outstanding. H.G.M.

### "Liliom"

**F**ERENC Molnar's clever and beautiful play *Liliom* is a masterpiece worthy of periodical revival, but the English public has never appeared responsive to its appeal. For the latest attempt to persuade London to appreciate this Hungarian work we are indebted to the Grenier-Hussenot Company from Paris, who played in a French translation.

The chief character, known by the sobriquet of "Liliom," or the Lily, is a barker in a Budapest fairground and is by way of being a low-caste masher. In seven scenes the play depicts his various delinquencies in this world and the next. It is a fascinating story with such elements as rough courtship, quarrels, a card game for stakes too high, a lying-in-wait to rob with violence, a death-bed, a supernatural court and a brief strange return to earth. The play seems to contain all that has usually succeeded in a theatre, and its admirers, if too few, are wholehearted. At the Saville, the settings were bare and unimaginative, the lighting was often harsh and the costumes too comic, but the acting, stylised almost to the limit of ballet, was sensitive and effective.

M. Yves Robert, rather slight in physique, played Liliom on "apache" lines. Mdlle. Marie Mergey gave a beautiful rendering of the part of Julie, and Mdlle. Rosy Varte gave a strong performance as Madame Muscat. The last scene, where Liliom returns to Earth and unrecognised visits Julie and the child born after his suicide, did not fail in its triumphantly pathetic appeal. Mdlle. Genevieve Armel played the girl Louise with admirably sympathetic simplicity. (*Parade* and *Orion le Tueur* were also included in this limited season.) H.G.M.

(Continued on page 12)



# Whispers from the Wings

BY  
LOOKER ON

NEARLY two hundred years ago David Garrick moved into an elegant house in Southampton Street, within easy reach of his beloved Drury Lane. With his wife, the Austrian dancer, Violette, he lived there for 22 years, during which time he was ever on the look out for new plays and new talent. What was once a powder closet in that same house, Peter Daubeny now uses as an office, his headquarters for discovering promising players and playwrights. Garrick himself would have welcomed young Daubeny as a tenant, for though only 27, he has already won the respect of the profession and the public. So far, he has not struck a large-scale popular success, but by presenting such sincere plays as *Jacobowsky and the Colonel*, *The Wind is Ninety* and *Power without Glory*, he has proved himself a manager of taste and discrimination.

While at Marlborough Daubeny was intended for the Coldstream Guards, but Hugh Walpole diverted him towards the theatre and suggested he might learn the ropes at the Liverpool "Rep." His first appearance as an actor was in *The Man in Possession*. He understudied Alan Webb in the Raymond Massey part, playing opposite Ena Burrill. The audience expected to see a dominating specimen of self-confident manhood, but when a little boy of seventeen, looking even younger than his years, appeared on the stage, they greeted him with unrestrained laughter. However, the management were so pleased with his courage in tackling so difficult a situation that they made him a member of the permanent company at £8 a week, and revived *The Astonished Ostrich* and *The Pelican* specially for him.

During the war he served as a Lieutenant in the Coldstreams, determined to become a theatre manager as soon as he returned to civilian life. With the help of fellow officers, he started forming plans in the Desert, so that no time should be lost when he reached home. In 1943 he was invalided out of the Army and came back to a London enjoying the flush of wartime successes. The returned warrior was given no encouragement from the ruling impresarios. He met unbridled prejudice and antipathy. One magnate, claiming to have the best properties and artists under his thumb, told Daubeny he was wasting his time, and another, with a reputation for importing American successes, fumed with rage at the thought of anyone daring to trespass upon territory which had yielded so much gold during the war years.



• Anthony Buckley

## PETER DAUBENY

Fortunately Daubeny had friends in such people as Lonsdale, Novello, Coward and Cochran. So at the age of 24, in the face of bitter opposition, he courageously launched himself into management, plunging in at the deep end, and literally buying his experience. His American playwright friend, S.N. Behrman, gave him *Jacobowsky and the Colonel*, which brought Redgrave back to the theatre. He stood over Lonsdale for three months while he wrote *But for the Grace of God* at the rate of two or three pages a day. Novello amusingly dramatised Daubeny's managerial difficulties in *We Proudly Present*. For a time, at the Duke of York's, Daubeny turned actor again, playing himself on the stage, just as Mrs. Patrick Campbell once appeared as herself when Novello's *Party* was presented in New York. When Daubeny lay wounded in Tripoli, Coward, passing through on a troop concert tour, had discussed plans, and later persuaded him to transfer that powerful crime play, *Power Without Glory*, from the Lindsey to the Fortune. Cochran always lent a sympathetic ear, so this newcomer to the managerial ranks found it a comfort to know that he was not entirely alone on the bleak business side of the theatre.

(continued overleaf)



## Whispers from the Wings (Cont'd)

Daubeney is a champion of youth and believes in giving young talent a chance. He has faith in such playwrights as Michael Clayton Hutton, Paul Jones, Cyril Butcher and Roger Burford. Their names mean little to the public at the moment, but Daubeney is enthusiastic about their scripts and has plans for them. Geoffrey Bevan is another new name. While in the Army guarding Mr. Churchill at Chequers during the war, Bevan and Daubeney together wrote *Point to Point*, which is at present enjoying a prior-to-London try-out with Adrienne Allen, Ronald Ward, Irene Browne and Evelyn Roberts in the cast.

Yet another Noel Langley play is to be seen in London. Daubeney believes that this young South African dramatist is the most exciting and invigorating influence in the post war theatre. This summer he is presenting his *Farm of Three Echoes*, a story of love and passion on the South African veldt, with Mary Clare and Griffith Jones in the leading parts. It opens at Newcastle in early July. It will not be surprising if this young manager brings Fay Compton back to the stage. In his opinion she is our finest actress and her recent performance in *Family Portrait* her greatest achievement. Maybe one of those scripts in Garrick's house will offer her an equally golden opportunity.

## New Shows of the Month (Continued)

### "Lucrece"

IT is said that 350 years ago the name of William Shakespeare was best known in this country as the author of "The Rape of Lucrece," a pamphlet of verses. Presumably the poet did not deem the subject suitable for a play. Now, however, by way of France and America, it has reached the English legitimate stage. It is still a poem. The principal performers are two masked and hooded narrators, who eloquently recite the tragic story, here illustrated by tableaux vivants, mime, occasional dialogue, and at peak periods dramatic action and dialogue. Thornton Wilder appears to have conveyed faithfully Andre Obey's creation. The work is French in spirit, delicate, sensitive, fascinating, intense. Shakespeare's images and phrases occur with frequency, nevertheless, delighting the ear and condoning a little insular pique.

Colin Chandler's production is admirable. The picture of Lucrece spinning with her maidens has all the pathos of quiet loveliness. Irene Worth, although more suited physically to comedy than tragedy, is marvellously true in voice and action to Obey's Lucrece. There seem to be no Roman ladies, but Jill Balcon presents a most acceptable Greek profile as Emilia. Tarquin

(Continued on page 39)

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*Loveless*: This winter shall be the nery trial of my virtue.

The prologue of the play, in which Loveless announces his intention of leaving his simple country surroundings for the temptations of the Metropolis. (Audrey Fildes as Amanda, and Anthony Ireland as Loveless.)

## “*The Relapse*” or *Virtue in Danger*”

FEW revivals of Restoration comedies have met with the immediate success of this brilliant rendering of Sir John Vanbrugh's classic. Originally produced at the Lyric, Hammersmith, by The Company of Four, *The Relapse* came to the Phoenix at the end of January and has been one of the most popular comedies in Town ever since. Anthony Quayle has directed with a sure and vigorous touch; the settings and costumes by Jeannetta Cochrane are a colourful ingredient, while the company, headed by Cyril Ritchard and Madge Elliott, play their parts with such finished artistry and irresistible lightheartedness that one is left with the impression that this is undoubtedly the wittest play ever written in the English tongue.

*The Relapse*, with its spontaneous humour, intriguing situations and old-world gusto should keep London laughing for many months.



Lord F.: 'Tis an unspeakable pleasure to be a man of quality, strike me dumb!

Sir Novelty Fashion, newly created Lord Foppington (Cyril Ritchard).

PICTURES BY ANGUS McBEAN



Coupler: Well, sir, you must know I have done you the kindness to make up a match for your brother.

Lord Foppington's penniless young brother is assured by Coupler, the wily match maker, that he is on the road to achieving an affluent marriage for his Lordship, which is bound to affect the fortunes of Young Fashion.

(L. to R.): Michael Warre as Young Fashion, Richard Wordsworth as Coupler and Edward Burnham as Lory.

Lord Foppington, much becurled and gorgeously attired, sallies forth to spend his accustomed day and is soon indulging in sly chit chat with the lovely widow, Berinthia, who is cousin to Amanda Loveless' wife.

(Left): Madge Elliott as Berinthia



Loveless: Sure this addition of quality must have so improv'd this coxcomb, he can't but be very good company for quarter of an hour.

In their town house Loveless and Amanda are much amused by Lord Foppington's social call, and are determined to make the most of his company. Meantime Loveless is casting amorous eyes on Berinthia and is delighted when his wife suggests that her lovely cousin should come and stay with them.



*Loveless: He's run thro' the guts, I tell thee.*

Lord Foppington pays unwelcome attention to Amanda, whom he had seen at the theatre the night before, and for his pains is forced into a duel with Loveless. The slight prick he receives as a result is made the occasion of great fuss, and he is carried away protesting he is at death's door. (Left: Tristram Butt as Dr. Serringe.)



*Lord F. :* With the temper of a philosopher and the discretion of a statesman—I will go to the play with a sword in my scabbard.

Once again the desperate young brother forces an audience with the elder, but to no good purpose for Lord Foppington is not to be drawn into argument.



*Loveless :* Is my wife within?

*Abigail :* No, sir, she has been gone this half hour.

In spite of his earlier resolve, Loveless' virtue proves to be no match for Berinthia's wiles, and he plans to have time alone with the widow when his wife is out of the house. (Elizabeth Jeppe as Abigail, Berinthia's maid.)



*Berinthia* : You'll never leave  
roguing, I see that.

Berinthia meantime is engaged in a plot with Worthy, a gentleman of the town, and a former admirer, who is bent on winning the favours of Loveless' wife, the virtuous Amanda. It is Berinthia's intention to engage Amanda's interest elsewhere while she herself pursues her intrigue with her cousin's husband. (David King-Wood as Worthy.)



*Young F.* : Sir, I hope you'll  
find this letter an authentic  
passport.

The boisterous scene outside Sir Tunbelly Clumsey's country residence when Young Fashion impersonates his brother, and, presenting himself as Lord Foppington, arrives to claim the hand of Sir Tunbelly's daughter. (Hamlyn Benson as Sir Tunbelly.)



*Hoyden* : His honour desires  
you'll be so kind as to let  
us be marry'd tomorrow.

Miss Hoyden, a gauche and lusty wench, once she has set eyes on her attractive fiance, is determined to be married to him without delay, and she sets about persuading her old Nurse to hasten the ceremony. (Jessie Evans as Hoyden and Wynne Clark as Nurse.)





*Young F.*: I'm glad to fit  
you alone; for I have some  
thing of importance  
to speak to you about.

Young Fashion achieved  
his object and Bull, Sir  
Tunbelly's Chaplain,  
called in to solemnise the  
marriage.

*Loveless*: Come into the  
closet, madam, there's  
moonshine upon the couch.

Back in London Berin-  
thia's plans go well.  
Though coy and full of  
protestations, she needs  
little encouragement to  
fall into *Loveless*' arms.



*Sir Tunbelly Clumsey*:  
your Lordship will please  
to walk in we'll help you  
to more brown sugar cane.

When the real Lord For-  
pington arrives to claim  
his bride, Sir Tunbelly  
naturally thinks he is  
imposter, if not star-  
gazing mad.



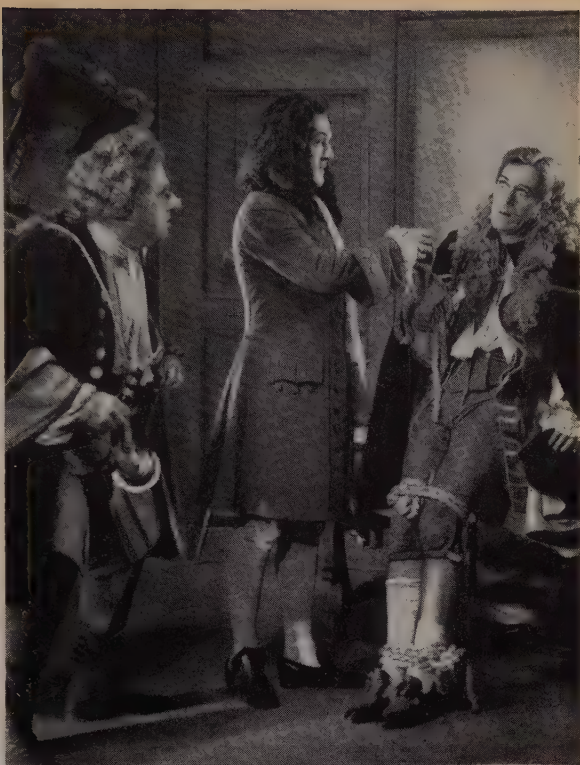
*Sir John* : My dear Lord Foppington!  
*Lord F.* : Dear Friendly, thou art come  
 in the critical minute, strike me dumb.  
*Sir John* : Why, I little thought to have  
 found you in fetters.

Battered, beaten and bound hand  
 and foot, Lord Foppington, who  
 has been set upon by Sir Tunbelly  
 and his servants, sends for Sir  
 John Friendly, who immediately  
 identifies him as the real Lord  
 Foppington. (Centre: David Bird  
 as Sir John Friendly.)

(Below) : *Sir Tunbelly* : My lord, here's  
 my girl, she's yours.

*Lord Foppington* : Sir, I do receive her  
 like a gentleman.

Unaware of his daughter's hasty  
 marriage with Young Fashion, Sir  
 Tunbelly offers her hand to his  
 Lordship, much to the embarrass-  
 ment of the Chaplain and Nurse.  
 (Extreme left: Frederick Bennett  
 as Bull, the Chaplain.)





*Amanda* : Help, heaven, or I am lost.

*Amanda* resists the advances of *Worthy*, who is so moved by her distress, that he does not pursue his evil purpose. *Virtue* is triumphant.



*Tunbely* : Let me beat out his brains and that will decide all.

A moment towards the end of the play after it is revealed that *Hoyden* was already married to *Young Fashion* when *Lord Foppington* claimed his bride. His Lordship is challenged by *Lory*, *Coupler* and *Sir Tunbely*, but all is smoothed out before the curtain falls.

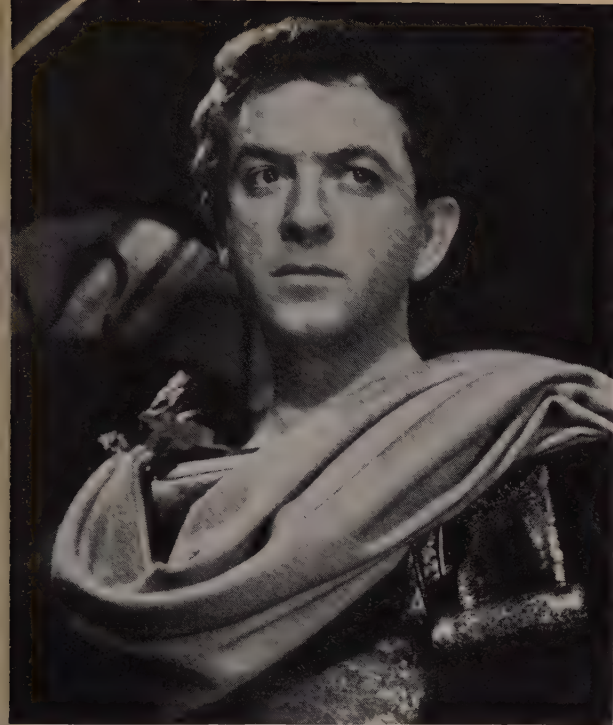


## “*Coriolanus*”

● SCENES from the last production of The Old Vic Theatre Company's current season at the New Theatre. E. Martin Browne's production of Shakespeare's rarely performed play has aroused much interest and it is a tribute to the producer that modern parallels have been drawn with a sure touch. The play is presented with great simplicity so that its meaning is always clear, and to this end the unobtrusive but effective decor by Stella Mary Pearce contributes a great deal. The company, headed by John Clements, Alec Guinness and Rosalind Atkinson, give magnificent performances. Lovers of Shakespeare should not fail to see this play before the end of the season.

PICTURES BY

JOHN VICKERS



JOHN CLEMENTS  
as Coriolanus



*Coriolanus*: What's the matter, you dissentious rogues. That rubbing the poor itch of your opinion make yourselves scabs?

Caius Martius (later Coriolanus), proud young patrician army officer, handles a crowd of dissatisfied Roman workers with haughty disdain.

(Left): Alec Guinness as Menenius, member of the Senate and friend of Coriolanus.



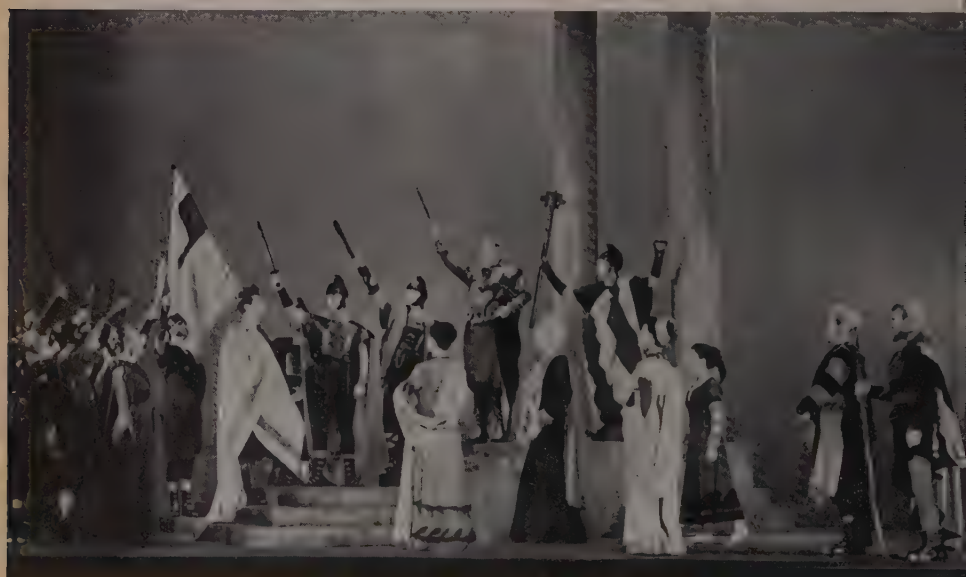
*Valeria* (Pauline Jameson): Verily I do not jest with you: there came news from him last night.

*Valeria*, a friend, brings news of *Coriolanus* to his wife, *Virgilia* (Eileen Vine). (Right): *Rosalind Atkinson* as *Volumnia*, and, in background, *Norma Shebbeare* as Gentlewoman.



*Martius*: I'll fight with none but thee, for I do hate thee worse than a promise-breaker.

The scene at *Corioli*, when *Caius Martius* overcomes *Aufidius*, leader of the *Volscians* after the *Roman* forces had been forced to retreat and, but for *Caius Martius'* great rallying cry, would have lost the day. (Harry Andrews as *Aufidius*.)



*Herald* (George Rose): Welcome to Rome, renowned *Coriolanus*.

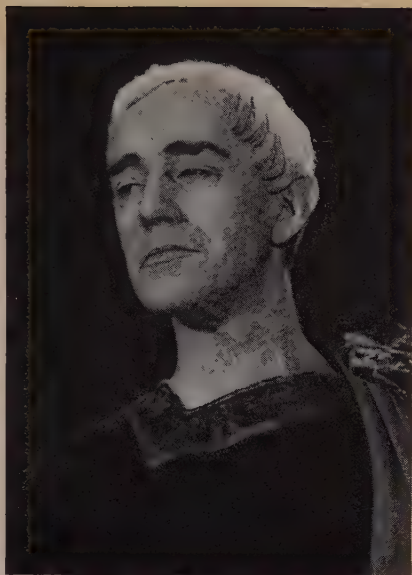
After his great and glorious military victory against the *Volscians* *Coriolanus* is acclaimed by the whole city on his return to Rome.





*Citizen* : You have received many wounds for your country.  
*Coriolanus* : I will not seal your knowledge with showing them.

Coriolanus, in the gown of humility, refuses to go through with the time-honoured ceremony of showing his wounds before his final appointment as Consul.



ALEC GUINNESS  
 as Menenius Agrippa,  
 wise old friend  
 and  
 counsellor to Coriolanus.



*Menenius* : Do not cry havoc, where you should but hunt with modest warrant.

The mob turns against the arrogant Coriolanus, and Menenius tries to restrain them, when, led by the two Tribunes, they seek to apprehend his headstrong young friend.

(The group includes *L. to R.*, Kenneth Connor as 1st Citizen, Mark Dignam as Sicinius, Peter Copley as Junius Brutus, and Kenneth Edwards as Titus Lartius.)



*Coriolanus* : My sometime General I have seen thee stern and thou hast oft beheld Heart-hardening spectacles. Tell these sad women 'Tis fond to wail inevitable strokes As 'tis to laugh at them.

Persuaded by his friends to appease the mob, Coriolanus nevertheless again enrages them, and with his life at stake is banished.

(Centre: Cecil Winter as Cominius.)



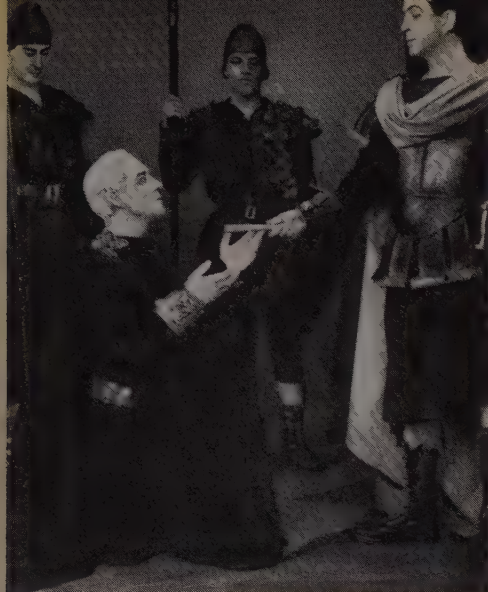
*Aufidius* : O Martius, Martius, each word thou has spoke hath weeded from my heart a root of ancient envy.

Coriolanus, filled with revenge, embraces the cause of his old enemy, Aufidius.



The two Tribunes who agitated for Coriolanus' downfall, are alarmed when news comes of his triumphant march towards their city. (Mark Dignam and Peter Copley.)





*Coriolanus* : Yet for I loved thee, take this along, I writ it for thy sake.

Menenius comes to the Volscian Camp to beseech Coriolanus to spare Rome. But he is adamant, relenting only to grant the old man his life.



ROSALIND ATKINSON  
as Volumnia

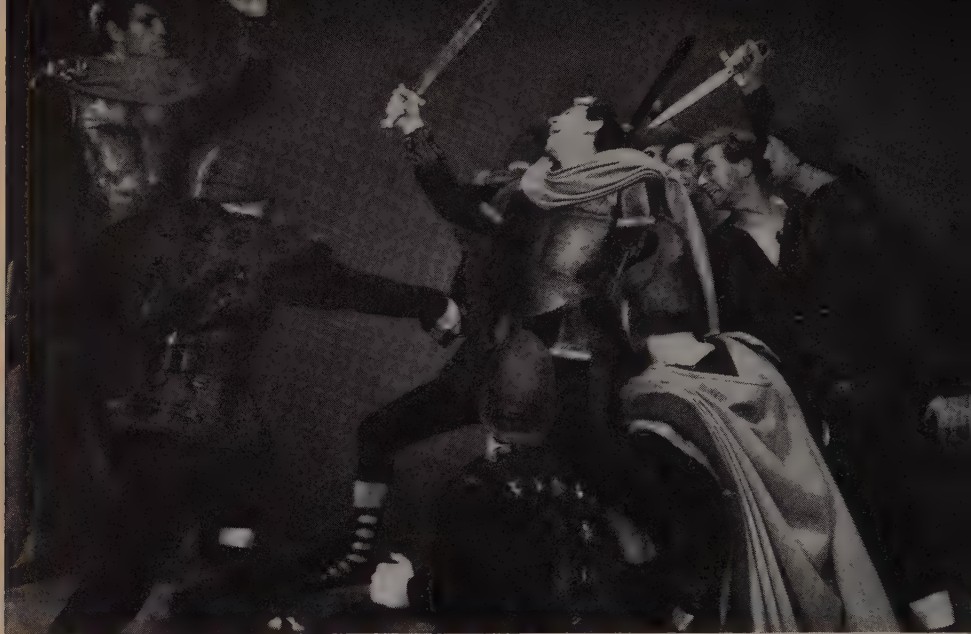
in the moving scene when she pleads with her son to spare his people.



*Volumnia* : Down Ladies : let us shame him with our knees. To his surname Coriolanus 'longs more pride than pity to our prayers.

Volumnia's entreaties prevail and Coriolanus agrees to make peace with Rome, a decision which determines Aufidius to strike down his old enemy.

(Left: Michael Lewer as Young Martius.)



*Conspirators:* Kill, kill, kill him!

After Coriolanus' unexpected withdrawal from Rome at the moment when complete victory was in his grasp, the Volscian lords at Corioli are summoned by Aufidius to the market place where he denounces Coriolanus as a traitor. Once again the people are enraged, and in the ensuing confusion Coriolanus is assassinated.



*Aufidius:* My rage is gone, and I am struck with sorrow.

The closing moments of the play. Aufidius, moved by Coriolanus' brave end, himself assists in carrying the body in military honour from the scene.





Liam Redmond as Christy Mahon (The Playboy), Elspeth March as the attractive Widow Quin and Eithne Dunn as Pegeen Mike in an early scene from the play. The Playboy, a stranger to the village, has arrived at Pegeen's father's inn after—so he says—murdering his father.

(Right): Old Mahon (Hugh Griffith), the Playboy's father, has a chat with the Widow Quin and convinces her that he is still alive, though his son had struck him down in the fields with an agricultural implement and left him for dead.



## PICTURES

BY

LIONEL FITZGERALD

# **“The Playboy of the Western World”** AT THE MERCURY THEATRE

● THE Pilgrim Players' revival of J. M. Synge's play is an occasion for congratulation, for not only is it far too long since this delightful play was seen in London, but the present production is beautifully rendered and produced. Liam Redmond, who was much praised for his performance in *Happy As Larry*, is, as one might expect, much at home with Synge's lovely language and the others in the company share with him a real insight into the spirit of the comedy. Playgoers should certainly avail themselves of this opportunity of seeing an outstanding play magnificently acted.



Old Mahon shows the frequenters of the Inn that blow from a mere boy does not kill an old war horse. The Playboy had enjoyed considerable fame because of his fell deed, but now the village withdraws its former admiration, and the Playboy in turn begins to dislike them.



*(Left):*  
A love scene between Pegeen and the Playboy. The alluring Widow Quin is also a rival for the young man's affections.

*(Below):*  
The scene where Pegeen and the frequenters of the Inn turn on the Playboy after they have found out that his story of having murdered his father is quite untrue. In the end the Playboy leaves the Inn with his father, and Pegeen is left to mourn her lost lover.





# Comedy Born of Despair

by ERIC JOHNS

**T**HOUGH Elena Miramova is an actress, for years she has been a favourite ballerina of mine. She has never danced Swanhilda or Aurora, but she once played Grusinskaya, the passé, disillusioned ballerina in *Grand Hotel*, with such realism that instinctively I knew how the character would dance. I could sense the quality of her Giselle, so spiritual, so tender and so tragic. Grusinskaya has haunted Miramova's artistic life ever since she took over the part from Leontovich during the New York run of Vicki Baum's play. In a way Grusinskaya has influenced the writing of *Dark Eyes*, Miramova's fantastic Russian frolic which looks like packing the Strand Theatre for months to come.

At one point during the war, when things wore their blackest hue, Miramova touched such depths of depression that she became more like the despairing Grusinskaya than her own sparkling self. She was in New York. She was out of work. There were no parts suited to her dark Slavonic beauty and that attractively broken English accent. The bank balance was rapidly approaching zero. She called on all the managers and agents she knew. There was nothing doing, and not a gleam of hope for the future. It looked like the end. There was no pleasure in going out and pretending all was well, and there was less pleasure in remaining at home, listening to news bulletins which became more pessimistic and alarming with the passing of the days.

One morning the gloom of the radio drove her out to take a walk on Fifth Avenue. There she met a dizzy American blonde of untold wealth, a senseless but harmless hostess who had known Miramova in the days of success. Miramova "put on an act," giving the impression that she was merely waiting for a theatre in order to return to Broadway in a wonderful part. The celebrity-hunting hostess immediately invited her to a palatial country house for the week-end, adding that she could bring a friend if she so desired. Stepping into her Chrysler, she purred away.

Miramova thought it might be a means of escape from the radio and the loneliness of her apartment. She was considering a companion, when she ran into Eugenie Leontovich, whom we, in London, once worshipped in *Tovarich*. Leontovich was also on the brink of despair, but seeing Miramova, she too, "put on an act" about waiting for a theatre and a wonderful part. That was too much for Miramova's sense of fun. Roaring with laughter, she cried, "Come off it, Eugenie. If we had such wonderful parts we'd be playing them; not talking about them!" They both



ELENA MIRAMOVA  
actress and author of *Dark Eyes*,  
now at the Strand.

owned up to their sorry plight and decided to join forces for the week-end, after cleverly roping in an English actor with a car to drive them to the country.

When they arrived at the house they were faced by the hostess's mother, the American equivalent of a blue blooded English duchess. She looked aghast at these fantastic people, with their even more fantastic luggage. They might have been a circus troupe. The two actresses sensed the situation at once and in their room they decided that the week-end would be intolerable unless they conquered the old lady's heart. They turned on such charm as their theatre-going public had never seen, and staged a Russian birthday party for her. In no time the old lady was won over. She even sought their company and confessed that she had not enjoyed herself so much for years. The week-end was an unqualified success. The two troupers had enjoyed acting again and Miramova went back to New York with an idea.

Surely such an amusing situation would make a play. She thought of three penniless, temperamental actresses, dynamic Russians with no small talk, and liable to turn the house into an uproar over the smallest difference of opinion. Their presence in a Long Island home should

(Continued overleaf)

provide excellent material for a comedy. It had wonderful ingredients—gaiety, sentiment, romance, lunacy and a whole succession of amusing situations. Feeling she had hit upon an idea, she set it down on paper to the best of her ability, but never having written a play in her life, she turned in search of good honest opinion.

She telephoned Herman Shumlin, who produced *Watch on the Rhine* in New York. She wanted to know if she had any talent, and promised to abide by his opinion. If he said the script was no good she was prepared to drop it in the waste paper basket and forget it. Shumlin was delighted with it. He thought the dialogue brilliant and the characters charming, but the dramatic construction needed improvement. So in the throes of a New York heat-wave, Miramova re-wrote the play half-a-dozen times, and each time read it to Leontovich, who was vastly amused. Eventually they completed what they considered their final and best possible version. Then came the question of selling it.

After much raising and dashing of hopes, they went to Hollywood and contacted Ben Hecht, who invited them to dinner, with the idea of reading the play afterwards. Jed Harris, who produced *The Royal Family* and *Our Town* on Broadway, was also a guest. When coffee was served, the company adjourned to Mr. Hecht's bedroom, so that he could enjoy the reading in comfort. The others were installed in armchairs, while Mr. Hecht reclined on his bed, more than half concealed by elaborate yellow taffeta curtains.

All Miramova could see of him when she commenced to read, was a row of waistcoat buttons. She could not see his face to judge his reaction and she could not detect a sound behind the curtains, but each time the waistcoat buttons bobbed up and down she realised he was laughing. They acted as her barometer. They did so much bobbing during the last scene that as soon as Miramova read the last line of the play, both Hecht and Harris said in one voice,

"I'll buy it!" They agreed not to quarrel over it, but to present it together, with Miramova and Leontovich in the leading parts. Their depression was well and truly dispelled. It all lifted so unexpectedly that they almost fainted with excitement. Later their tempestuous performances on Broadway in this piece, which they called *Dark Eyes*, helped to cheer many a melancholy American playgoer during the war years.

*Dark Eyes* saved the sanity and maybe the life of another Russian actress, Eugenia Delarova, whom we once admired as a dancer in the heyday of the De Basil Ballet. Last year Delarova was suffering acutely from Grusinskayan despair, when she met Baronova on Madison Avenue, at the time when Gerald Sevastianov, Baronova's husband, was negotiating the London production of *Dark Eyes*. Delarova was so depressed that she announced her intention of going straight home to commit suicide. Things really looked grim, but Baronova comforted her friend in true Russian fashion by saying, "Wait a couple of days I'll speak to Gerry." She went home and spoke to her husband, who, also in true Russian fashion, immediately telephoned Delarova, "Don't commit suicide, Eugenia. I'll put you into *Dark Eyes*." "All right I won't," came the assuring voice from the other end of the line. Now Delarova is delighting us at the Strand, playing Olga Shmylevskaya, the only Russian who hates Tchaikovsky.

Miramova has now gone to Iceland to complete her latest play, *Marriage on High Heels*, which she hopes to bring to London for its première. She enjoys the loneliness of Iceland, which, she explains, is something to be desired, "Like the universal loneliness of Chekhov's plays." Though there are no trees, grass or flowers, she is exhilarated by the romantic beauty of the rocks in sunlight. It seems a curious birthplace for a sophisticated comedy, but let us hope that, like *Dark Eyes*, this new play will inspire the cast and stimulate the audience when it eventually reaches the stage.



**"You won't tell a soul, will you . . . ?"**

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# Echoes from Broadway

BY OUR AMERICAN CORRESPONDENT E. MAWBY GREEN

IT'S prize-giving time again in New York and each morning the papers carry another announcement to the effect that the Ladies' Wednesday Matinee Society of Armonk has just voted *A Streetcar Named Mister Roberts* the best play of the season. These awards are coming in with such regularity that they mean virtually nothing, the exceptions, of course, being the prestige bearing Pulitzer Prize, which has yet to be awarded, and the New York Drama Critics' Circle citation, which has just gone to Tennessee Williams' superb study of the moral disintegration of a woman, *A Streetcar Named Desire*, with a remarkable seventeen votes out of a possible twenty-one. This overwhelming majority came as something of a shock to the *Mister Roberts* enthusiasts who expected the Thomas Heggen-Joshua Logan smash-hit to put up a better showing than the two votes it received as runner-up. However, they are consoling themselves with the fact that this romantic comedy of life aboard a cargo vessel during the war, seems to be winning the most awards, a readily understandable situation since *Mister Roberts* is comedy and pure popular entertainment as opposed to the painful, sombre and sordid drama which is *A Streetcar Named Desire*. The remaining two votes went to William Wister Haines' drama of Army Air Force generals, *Command Decision*, and Robinson Jeffers' adaptation of Euripides' *Medea*.

As the best foreign play of the year produced in New York, Terence Rattigan's *The Winslow Boy* triumphed over Jean-Paul Sartre's *The Respectful Prostitute* ten votes to five, while three votes went to Denis Johnston's *The Old Lady Says "No!"* two to Michael MacLiammoir's *Where Stars Walk* and one to Berthold Brecht's *Galileo*. No musical was deemed worthy of an award—an indirect slap at Rodgers' and Hammerstein's very successful and very pretentious *Allegro*.

Of the new plays seen this past month, two of them were inspired by their success in London. Theatre Incorporated in association with Brian Doherty presented Norris Houghton's production of *Macbeth*, bringing over Michael Redgrave for the title role, which he first played a few months ago in the West End, Flora Robson for Lady Macbeth when Ena Burrill's commitments prevented her making the crossing, and Geoffrey Toone, Hector MacGregor and Gillian Webb for Banquo, Ross and one of the Wierd Sisters respectively, plus Paul Sheriff's colourful and exciting settings and



Michael Newell, Valerie White, Owen Holder, Alan Webb and Madge Compton in the American production of *The Winslow Boy*, voted the best foreign play of the year produced in New York.

(Picture by Vandamm)

costumes. The remaining members of the large company were cast over here and the critical reception to this carefully planned and often exciting production was generally unfavourable with seven reviewers failing to recommend it to their readers while two showered it with praise. However, the theatre was sold out on second night with both Mr. Redgrave and Miss Robson earning their bravos and leaving Theatre Incorporated without too much to worry about for the limited eight week engagement. On the other hand, the Theatre Guild received five favourable, although not exactly rapturously enthusiastic notices, for its production of George Bernard Shaw's *You Never Can Tell* with Peter Ashmore duplicating the directorial job he did in London, only to find their audiences too sparse to continue beyond their subscription period of five weeks.

Norris Houghton's basic idea of staging a wild and primitive *Macbeth* in keeping with the time of the play which is 11th century Scotland, proved so sound as to make us all wonder why it was never done before like that over here. All the bloody scenes—*Macbeth* and Lady *Macbeth* immediately after Duncan's murder, the gory ghost of Banquo, the final duel—came off superbly well, but their melodramatic effect was largely viti-



Michael Redgrave and Flora Robson in the Broadway production of *Macbeth*.

(Picture by Hugelmeier)

ated by Mr. Redgrave's painfully detailed and introspective interpretation of *Macbeth* that almost invariably halted the action while he psychoanalysed himself. With little variety in this soul stripping and no poetry in his deliberate readings, Mr. Redgrave's *Macbeth* must be marked down as a disappointment. Miss Robson was much kinder to the verse but strangely lacking in steel for an actress of her strength. She, too, must go down as a disappointment and it seems most probable that American

theatregoers will continue to remember Maurice Evans and Judith Anderson who ever they think of *Macbeth*.

*You Never Can Tell*, Mr. Shaw's comedy of the emancipated woman who wasn't quite emancipated enough, written half a century ago, was found by many to be "dated" as "old fashioned" and then unfortunately compared unfavourably—even by those who liked the play—with Maurice Evans' sparkling production of *Man And Superman*, the reigning hit. The Theatre Guild assembled another of its "name" casts for this half some revival, but in several cases the actor's ability wasn't equal to the "name," with exceptions being Leo G. Carroll's affectionate portrayal of the Waiter and Tom Helmore's ingratiating Valentine. Several members of the cast come over from England with director, Peter Ashmore, but the attempts to give a stylised performance were none too successful. Everybody was guilty at times of acting either too broad or too kittenish and cute.

The third play of the month, *Joy To The World*, a comedy about Hollywood by Allan Scott and presented by John Houseman and William R. Katzell, is doing fine business in spite of a mixed press because the fun it pokes at The Industry is gaggy, noisy and hectic although Mr. Scott is really more interested in awakening the public to Hollywood's current censoring of pictures of idealism and people in favour of escape entertainment. Any thinking member of the audience is sure to appreciate Mr. Scott's purpose, although his presentation of the problem is in the worst movie tradition and embarrassingly shoddy.

The action revolves around the vice-president in charge of production (Alfred Drake) who reads a speech attacking film censorship written by a member of his research department. Not having read the speech before delivering it he finds himself lined up with the Liberals in a stormy controversy. Too comfortable in his top bracket position he plans reversing his stand when he meets the writer of his speech, the lovely Mars Hunt. If you have seen more than one Hollywood movie in your life, you can take it from there. Miss Hunt strengthens Mr. Drake's liberal convictions when they fall in love; the New York board of directors

(Continued on page 37)

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RAYMOND RAYNER, Secretary



(Right): Pistol and Bardolph hatch an anti-Falstaff plot with Ford. A moment from Act I, Scene 2, in the garden of Ford's house, with (L. to R.) Stanley Pope as Ford, Marco Stefanoni as Pistol and Tony Sympson as Bardolph.



PICTURES BY  
HOUSTON-ROGERS

## 'Falstaff'

AT THE CAMBRIDGE

● Scenes from the New London Opera Company's brilliant production of Verdi's *Falstaff*, at the Cambridge Theatre, which received loud acclaim from the critics and has proved one of the most popular operas in the current repertoire.



ct II, Scene 1, a room at the Garter Inn. Ford, announcing himself as "Signor Fontana," asks Sir John Falstaff to help him in his wooing of Mistress Alice Ford. (Mariano Stabile as Falstaff.)



Later in Ford's house Falstaff makes love to Mistress Ford, unaware that the ladies are watching from behind a screen. (L. to R.): Mary Stewart, Emma Tegani, Daria Bayan and Bruna Maclean.

# Monck of Maddermarket

by  
ROSE  
TENENT



(Left):  
A glimpse of the  
used for the Norw  
Players' production  
Molière's *Malade  
aginaire*. This art  
tells something  
Nugent Monck's g  
work at the Mad  
market Theatre

**I**N 1921 Nugent Monck decided to turn a disused eighteenth-century church into an exact replica of an Elizabethan theatre. He called it the Maddermarket because it was near the medieval market place where madder roots were sold for dyeing Norwich wool. Since then, his company—The Norwich Players—have presented about 300 plays, including all the works of Shakespeare and many of Ibsen, Chekhov, Sheridan and Shaw.

With the exception of Nugent Monck himself, this famous company consists entirely of amateur actors and actresses. Seeking none of the personal glory so often craved by artistes of the commercial theatre, the Norwich Players are content to act anonymously and to forego any form of curtain call. All they ask is to be able to act in the plays they love and know so well. This company attracts full and regular audiences most of whom take out permanent season tickets year after year.

Nugent Monck would tell you that he is not a business man and has no business instincts. Nevertheless, his organising ability has been compared by Norman

Marshall in his book *The Other Theatre* with that of Diaghileff. Monck is not a Norwegian by birth; he went there in 1909 as a student studying music in London and acting in many years both in that city and in New York. For a time he was also stage manager of the famous Abbey Theatre, Dublin.

In Norwich, Monck concerned himself with the production of amateur theatricals. These took the form of every type of play, ranging from mystery dramas in his dressing room to colourful pageants in the open air. The loyal group of supporters who gathered round him for these occasions were all extremely ambitious. They wanted to act in the really great plays about which they had read and heard.

But before they could attempt any large scale production suitable premises had to be found. After pooling their resources the men discovered that £12 was all they had between them. With the hire of hall and other necessary expenses, Nugent Monck decided that the only type of production possible on this small amount of capital would be in the nature of religious drama.

(Continued on page 36)



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The 49th ordinary general meeting of Moss' Empires Ltd. was held on 8th April at the company's London offices, Cranbourn Mansions, Cranbourn Street, London, WC.

Mr. Prince Littler, chairman of the company, after dealing with the various items in the balance sheet, said: Additional sources of revenue have increased the trading profits from £381,545 to £463,510, which is the highest trading profit since the inception of the company. A year's working of the theatres acquired on 1st January 1947, has strengthened the directors in their view that the purchase was a wise one in the interests of the company, although the directors found it judicious to dispose of Penge Empire, which was unsuitable.

Interest on Debenture stocks shows a considerable increase on the preceding year on account of the 3½ p.c. Debenture stock issue. Provision for taxation on the profits of the year is again heavy, income tax provision requiring an additional £52,000. Provision for profits tax is £66,000, as compared with £123,070 of Excess Profits Tax provided for in the preceding year. Provision for depreciation is also heavier on account of the additional properties acquired. After making all these provisions, the balance carried into the appropriation account is £136,424, as compared with £107,468 in the preceding year.

Having made full provision for all contingencies so far as known or foreseen, including taxation, profits are available to pay 15 p.c. to the Ordinary stockholders for the year, and carry forward to the current year a larger sum than was brought in at the beginning of the year.

So far as the current year to date is concerned, I am pleased to say that business has shown rather better results than the corresponding period of 1947. The shows at the London Palladium, the London Hippodrome and the Prince of Wales Theatre have been very successful. The business done during the appearance of Danny Kaye at the London Palladium was phenomenal. It is to be regretted that so many of the theatre-going public were disappointed in their desire to witness the performance of this celebrated artiste.

I would like to express to the staff at the company's offices and theatres the thanks of the board for their loyal service during the year, and particularly I would like to convey to Mr. Val Parnell, our managing director, the board's high appreciation of his efforts on your behalf.

The report was adopted.

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## Monck of Maddermarket (Cont'd)

So it was that a group of Nativity plays were presented on the top floor of an historic building known as the Music House, on Twelfth Night, 1914. This hall, used by the city's minstrels in olden days and where Queen Elizabeth entertained, was approached by a steep and rickety old staircase and was really quite unsuitable for a theatre. Nevertheless, the ninety-nine seats were always filled by an enthusiastic audience, deeply appreciative of what this enterprising group of players had set out to achieve.

"The thing I found so attractive was precisely the air of anonymity and devotion," wrote R. H. Mottram in his account of the Norwich Players to celebrate their Jubilee. "There were no names of the cast on the excellently printed (privately printed) and edited programme. There were no footlights, but as time went on, the most modern, and, I consider, pleasing direct lighting effects. No band, but a spinet."

And so the Norwich Players went from strength to strength. By 1921 they had presented Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*, *As You Like It*, *The Winter's Tale* and *Henry IV, Part I*. They had also given several medieval plays as well as a number of Restoration and Georgian comedies.

With more guarantors coming forward came the time to look for larger premises. Near the centre of the city Monck found a Georgian building which had originally been a church. Since then it had been used as a baking powder factory and as a hall for the Salvation Army. There was a gallery running right round and it seemed, on first sight, to be a most unlikely place for staging theatrical performances. However, Nugent Monck decided to acquire the building. He left the gallery as it was and built, at one end, an "Apron" stage—making it a real Elizabethan playhouse.

To-day the Maddermarket still caters for a small but enthusiastic audience—the theatre seats about 220 people. The actors remain anonymous and the programmes are still printed on fine art paper. Traditions are carried on in true Elizabethan style. To meet the great demand for seats a weekly serial ticket system has been introduced. This means that each production is given from Monday to Monday, instead of concluding in the customary manner on a Saturday night. "Maddermarket Mondays" are well known in Norwich; two recent productions have been Milton's *Comus*, and a harlequinade *The Magic Casement*, by Nugent Monck himself.

What of the future? "We hope to reopen

(Continued on opposite page)



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the theatre in September," says Mr. Monck. "We end our present season in July. By July, 1949, we will have given eleven productions. There will be three Shakespeares—a tragedy, a history and a comedy—a revival of Chekhov and a revival of Shaw, three modern plays (one ultra-modern to shock the audience) one experimental play, one Victorian and one brand new, by an unknown author."

### Echoes from Broadway (Contd)

fire him, but he comes out on top when an old independent producer, for his son who was killed in the war, gives Mr. Drake *carte blanche* to produce the pictures he wants.

Another stock comedy that has spanned the season with moderate success but has never been mentioned in these pages is *For Love or Money*, by F. Hugh Herbert, author of *Kiss And Tell*. This time Mr. Herbert is reviving the one about the innocent young girl who takes refuge on a stormy night in the home of a charming, middle-aged widower. The notices were unanimously bad, but press agent, Richard Maney, took several nice personal notices on June Lockhart as The Girl and ran "A Star is Born" campaign getting remarkable magazine coverage and literally saving the play. Miss Lockhart, the daughter of screen actor Gene Lockhart, is returning shortly to Hollywood where she will get another star build-up, probably indelibly impressing on her young mind the power of the press agent.

### NEW LOOK AND MAKE-UP

**W**HATEVER your views of the rather exaggerated styles in fashions at the moment, it is undisputable that the vogue today is for femininity in women. Make-up to match the season's style should be pink in tone and subdued.

Goya have produced a new lipstick this spring called the *Grandee*, and one of the newest shades is Goya Pink. This is a flattering colour, particularly for blondes, and is a delightful lipstick to use with its faint trace of Otto of Rose perfume.

It is remarkable to note that this large size lipstick is actually cheaper at 8/6 (including Purchase Tax) than the Goya one-hand automatic lipsticks, which will continue to be available at 11/10 (inclusive of Purchase Tax). British women are able in this instance to benefit from Goya's rapidly expanding export trade, which is mainly responsible for bringing down costs. The lipstick retains all the familiar quality associated with the name Goya.

The case for the new lipstick is made of specially treated metals so that the black enamel will not scratch or chip and the gilt will not tarnish. Other colours in *Grandee* lipstick are: Seventeen, Cherry, Basque, Trinidad, Petunia and Burgundy.

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## Amateur Stage

**F**OR many decades now the best vision of the amateur stage has been directed encouraging the production of original work. It is hard enough for a new author to get a hearing on the professional stage, but innumerable amateur groups can cope with a new script.

The great danger, often pointed out, is that amateur enthusiasm will outweigh discretion, with the result that rubbish is produced. This has happened often enough in the past, to the discouragement of many well wishers.

An example in April. Much time, effort and expense was put into the production of *The Pole, The Bottle and The Rope*, by T. J. R. Sennocke, by an unnamed company at the Scala Theatre. Never were resources more sadly misapplied.

Described as a new murder play of the 18th century, it proved to be dreary nonsense ineptly constructed and written. For three quarters of the evening the large stage was occupied by two characters engaged in interminable duologues, speaking a fustian language that was neither modern nor period.

Surely there was sufficient theatre experience associated with this premier amateur playhouse to warn the sponsors of the utter inadequacy of the script? The answer, no doubt, and true enough, would be that it was the normal course of theatre letting, responsibility for the play rests with the lessee and not the lessor. Which can only leave one regretting once more that these resources were not devoted to more worthy material.

At the Castle Museum, Norwich, until 2nd May, a British Theatre Exhibition is on view, under the auspices of the Norfolk Drama Committee, and compiled by the county drama organiser, J. A. Mitchley. Amateur and professional sections include designs and models for settings and costumes, photographs and masks. A graphic exhibit in the amateur section is a set of screens showing the building of Highbury Little Theatre, Sutton Coldfield. County work on view includes the plan for an open air theatre at North Walsham Modern Secondary School. A collection of dolls by P. Taylor-Smith occupies a third section.

*Johnny Miner, The Press Gang and The Enraged Musician*, is the triple musical brought by the Workers' Music Association at the Rudolf Steiner Hall from April 27th to 1st May. The third piece is Dr. Arnold's treatment of Hogarth's satire on the Italian professor of music.

The Society of Civil Service Authors invites Civil Service Amateur Groups to take part in a drama festival of full-length plays by Civil Service authors. It is to be held at theatres of their own choice in the month



of March, April and May 1949. Lord Vansittart, President of the Society, is presenting a trophy to the winning group. Applications for entry must be made not later than 30th June next to the Hon. Organiser, Mr. Neilson Gately, 78 North Side, London, SW4.

Medway Theatre Guild hold their third annual drama festival at the R. E. Theatre, Brompton, on 25th-29th May. Mr. John Bourne is adjudicator, with Viscountess Chilton assessing the three Youth Club teams.

Mr. C. H. May won first prize in the Arts Club, Sheffield, one-act, play competition with his drama, *The Lonely Heart*. Thirty-four entries were received. The winning play is entered by the Arts Club in Sheffield Drama Festival, 3rd-8th May, the author producing.

Amongst the interesting London productions in April were *Our Town*, by Tavistock Repertory Company; *And No Birds Sing* (first amateur performance in London), by Midland Bank D.S.; *Young Mrs. Barrington*, by Streatham D.C.; *Loyalties*, by Lloyds' D. & M.S. It is interesting to note the resumption of productions by Lloyds', after the war break. Formed in 1910, it will now resume its programme of one musical, one straight show a year at the Scala.

Too late for review in this issue, the Eastern Area Final of the B.D.L. Community Theatre Festival took place at the Scala on 26th April.

### New Shows of the Month (Continued)

is finely acted by Michael Goodliffe, darkly dynamic, lust made lustrous. It is really Irene Worth's evening, but, as already stated, it owes very much to narrated parts, and these are beautifully spoken by Kathleen Michael and John Wyse. The production is an important artistic achievement.  
H.G.M.

### "Portrait of Hickory"

**T**HIS play by Adrian Alington and Leslie Landau is moderately successful in itself, but suffers from the lack of a character who could be regarded with sympathetic satisfaction. The principal character is Sir Richard Hickory, who is inordinately proud of the exploits of an eccentric ancestor and his own emulation of them. The fate of the wife of such a man is dim and oppressed. They have an unfortunate little son, who is being steadily forced by his father to accept the intolerable role of yet another dare-devil Hickory. Tried beyond his capacity, the

(Continued overleaf)

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FOR FURTHER THEATRE ANNOUNCEMENTS  
PLEASE SEE PAGE 39

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boy dies in an attempt to imitate one of his father's juvenile exploits. Lady Hickory, dutiful subjection to her feudal lord ends with her child's death. Sir Richard wants an heir and the consequent *impasse* is finally resolved in a violent scene between them which Sir Richard is accidentally shot. Mortally wounded, he drives his car over a cliff, leaving Lady Hickory and a psychiatric friend listening for the crash.

Sir Richard being a brave man, the authors have had a lot of trouble to wrench sympathy away from him. His exaltation of physical courage has its coarse side when in view and his persistent endeavour to eliminate any trace of weakness in his wife and son is shown to have so large an element of cruelty as to leave him mentally unbalanced. So we must not admire the squire, well as Torin Thatcher plays him. Suffering wives are not admired. Judge Campbell's acting in this role always evokes admiration, but it is admiration for a complete and full performance and has little to do with Lady Hickory as a character. Can it have been that the authors expected us to admire the psychologist? His part is too thin for this nor does Clement McCallin bring very much to it.

The play raises serious issues and the neglects them. It would have been more worth serious study if the squire had not been written off as mad. Derek Tansley provides a little excellent light relief. But the play is chiefly interesting for Judge Campbell's performance, showing what an actress can do, given the stage, even with weak part.

H.G.M.

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